DA yields La. probe role

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BATON ROUGE—Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison has agreed to remove himself and his office from any state investigation of his possible participation in pinball bribery activities, it was learned today.

Atty. Gen. William Guste said he requested Garrison's recusal on not only Garrison's case, but on any others growing out of the federal investigation of pinball gambling in Louisiana.

Garrison and two others were acquitted last month of a federal charge of conspiracy to obstruct law enforcement by giving and taking bribes to protect pinball gambling.

The DA still is subject to potential state charges of public bribery.

Guste and Garrison met in the lobby of the Royal Orleans Hotel in New Orleans Oct. 8 to discuss the matter.

GUSTE SAID he will meet soon with federal prosecutors to go over any evidence that might be useful in a state investigation.

Guste said he and Garrison made no deals or agreements on whether to proceed with an investigation.

He said the only point discussed was the DA's recusal from Guste's investigation of Garrison and possibly others, including former New Orleans Police Supt. Joseph Giarrusso.

Guste said Garrison agrees with his position that it would be a conflict of interest for the DA's office to get involved in any investigation or prosecution of any possible pinball gambling violations.

"His position during the trial was to destroy all veracity of the evidence," Guste said. "This would be in conflict with the role of a prosecutor."

GUSTE SAID the meeting with Garrison was in view of everyone in the hotel lobby and was requested by Garrison. He said it followed a Guste letter to the DA requesting the recusal.

Guste said he is uncertain what course of action will be followed. A decision is expected within the next few weeks.

Guste has assigned the case to his organized crime section, headed by William Faust. Julian Murray, a former federal prosecutor, is prosecutor for the section.